

Cataclysm

by Rixel

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Summary: One can create anything. One can destroy anything. What would have happened if Chat Noir used Cataclysm on a living person? Even worse, what if that person was his one true love, Ladybug? How would he handle the consequences? And what would he do when he found out his classmate was also missing? Rated T for darkness and extremely mild swearing.

1. Chapter 1

**A/N: While my other Miraculous story is being edited, I thought I'd throw together another. Initially I thought it would only be a short story, but it's becoming a bit longer than I expected. Hopefully you like it.

>For story updates and other stuffs related to my fanfics, follow me on tumblr at [akirhenwrites dot tumblr dot com](http://akirhenwrites.tumblr.com)

* * *

><p>"Chat!"<p>

He heard his name being called out, but he couldn't do anything about it. He lost control as the akumatized King Pin's hand passed over his shoulder. He thought 'not again' as the King Pin took control of Chat Noir's body. This time was different though. King Pin's control over him was completely physical. For some reason, Chat could still see everything that was happening. He knew exactly what was going on. He just couldn't control it.

That made it worse.

Everything seemed to move by at a crazy speed. Because he wasn't controlling himself, it was dizzying to try and watch as the cursed body of Chat Noir bounced off walls and tumbled on the ground. Inside, he felt like he was in a washing machine trying to look out the window. It was nauseating. He knew he'd been forced to attack

Ladybug before, but actually seeing himself chasing after her was horrifying. Did she really have to remember him like this? He didn't understand how she could trust him. It felt like half the time he was taken over and made to be burden instead of help. Thankfully she was able to dodge his attacks well enough. She acted like it wasn't even a big deal to slide out of the way as Chat Noir's claws scratched out the air where she once was.

Chat cheered internally as he saw Ladybug snatch the patch off King Pin's shirt that contained the akuma. His gut wrenched as he heard himself shout the all too familiar "Cataclysm!", but Ladybug was already tossing the patch to the ground to crush it.

Chat watched in terror as his deadly hand swirling with black spots launched towards her. He'd never used Cataclysm on something alive before. He didn't dare. Cataclysm had the power to destroy anything.

Anything. Or anyone, he supposed.

Ladybug saw Chat Noir coming towards her and jumped back before she had a chance to stomp on the patch. Chat Noir's foot landed on the patch as he raced towards her; his hand still reached out towards her.

The patch ripped apart as his boot slipped on it. Chat regained his consciousness as he flung forward, and the small akuma glided up towards the sky. Ladybug caught sight of it and instantly grabbed for her yo-yo. She didn't notice that Chat Noir was unable to catch himself from tumbling straight into her.

His black spotted hand slammed right into her shoulder and they both fell to the ground. She gasped as she met his eyes. Once Chat realized what happened, he looked between his hand and her face. Her shoulder turned a faded brown and started to crumble.

"No," he said quietly. "No, no, no. Ladybug. I didn't mean to. It wasn't me. I didn'tâ€¦."

"I know." She smiled at him weakly as her face paled and crumbled away.

"Ladybug!" Chat tried to hold onto her as she disintegrated and faded away in the dust. Her earrings clattered to the ground in front of him. "No! No! Ladybug!? Ladybug!"

"Huh?" The unakumatized balding man in a bowling shirt rubbed his head. "What happened? Why am I here?"

Chat didn't hear him. He didn't see the purple akuma flying off into the sky. He didn't notice when the police arrived at the scene. All he knew was that Ladybug was gone.

And he'd killed her.

2. Chapter 2

Somehow time started to move again. Seconds turned to minutes, which turned to hours, and Adrien found himself sitting in his room unable

to move. He knew Plagg was around somewhere, but thankfully the kwami had enough sense to leave him be for now.

Adrien felt more hollow than human. He'd killed Ladybug. He didn't even have the excuse that he was being controlled because he was him when he touched her. He was him when Cataclysm ripped into her. He was him when she started to disappear.

He curled into himself and felt the tears splash down on his knees. The pair of red earrings with black spots poked his palm as he tightened his fists, but he didn't care. It was a pain he deserved. He'd killed her. He had murdered Ladybug. He was a monster. He was no better than Hawkmoth. Worse, even. Hawkmoth never actually killed anyone.

He was a villain. A cruel horrific monster. And no one knew.

The thought that there was an akuma still loose in the city hung in the back of his mind, but he didn't know what to do about it. Ladybug was gone, and she was the only one who could take care of them. Without her, Chat was useless. Without Ladybug, Paris was without a protector. Hawkmoth could reek havoc and control everyone. There was nothing Chat could do about it.

The sun started to rise before Plagg finally dared to approach Adrien. The little black kwami was careful and hesitate, which was far beyond his normal behavior.

"Adrien?" Plagg asked softly.

"I know," Adrien's voice was quiet and scratchy. "Time for school."

"You don't have to go," Plagg said. "You should take some time off. It's okay."

"No, it's not." Adrien got to his feet and went to his desk to collect his bag. "If I don't show up, it'll look bad. No one knows Ladybug is gone. And when they figure it out, I can't have any clues leading back to me being Chat Noir."

He tossed his books into his bag. He honestly didn't care if anyone knew who he was. Without Ladybug, he wasn't going to be Chat Noir. There was no point. But he was worried that if he said he wouldn't be Chat Noir anymore Plagg would leave. And he didn't think he could handle losing anyone else.

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><p>School turned out to be difficult. Maybe Plagg had been right. Adrien just couldn't bring himself to care about anything. His thoughts drifted during class and he didn't feel like talking when people tried to spark up a conversation. It wasn't until lunch, when Nino sat down beside him in a huff, than Adrien managed to mutter a greeting.<p>

"Man, this is hard." Nino sighed. "I don't know how to help Alya."

Adrien just shrugged. His best friend seemed to always have

difficulty with Alya. Normally he thought it was sweet, but at the moment all he could think about was how much of a monster he was.

"I know you don't talk to her, but have you heard from Marinette?" Nino shook his head. "Sorry man, I'm sure Alya's asked that like a million times already."

"Hm?" Adrien lifted his head to look at Nino. He knew his friend asked him something about Marinette, but he hadn't been paying attention.

"Dude, are you okay?" Nino asked. "You seem really out of it. Something happen with your dad again?"

Adrien looked down at his hand folded on his lap. "Yeah," he sighed. It wasn't right lying to Nino, but it was so much easier to agree. Besides, there was nothing Nino could do to help him. Except maybe stay away. Would his best friend want to be anywhere near him if he knew that Adrien was a murderer?

"Sorry," Nino put his hand on Adrien's shoulder, which caused him to jump. "Want to hang out this afternoon? Take your mind off him?"

Adrien shook his head and brushed Nino's hand off his shoulder.

"I'm fine," he lied.

The rest of school was a blur. Even after school, Adrien found himself moving through the motions so well he didn't even notice his father was having dinner with him. It was such a rare event that given any other time Adrien would be ecstatic to spend time with him. But now—what kind of son was he? Adrien sunk down into his chair. If his father knew what he'd done, would he push Adrien even farther away?

Not that he cared. Right now nothing mattered but Ladybug. He didn't care what his father thought about him. Well he did, but not so much at the moment.

"Sit up straight, Adrien." It was his fathers only words that evening.

After dinner, Adrien retreated to his room. He pulled the red earrings out from his pocket and simply stared at them. They were all that remained of Ladybug. There was nothing he could do. She was gone, and he was stuck here without her.

"Adrien," Plagg hesitated. "We need to go find that akuma."

"No," Adrien closed his fist and put the earrings back in his pocket.

"It's going to multiply," Plagg continued. "If it hasn't already. It's going to be a big threat."

"What do you want me to do!?" Adrien spun around and shouted at his kwami. "I can't purify it. I can't stop it. I can't do anything without her and she's not here!"

Plagg flinched back. "I know, but you can't just sit here."

"Watch me." Adrien flopped down on his couch and folded his arms.

Plagg was right, he knew, but there was no way he was going to be Chat Noir again. It was too painful. Let Paris suffer for a night. They owed Ladybug that. Besides, not only was he useless, Chat Noir was dangerous. What good was a superhero if they could accidentally kill people?

3. Chapter 3

The next day at school, Adrien dropped down into his seat with a loud thump. He still didn't care enough to be there, but part of him was paranoid about raising suspicions. Surely once they realized Ladybug was gone, they'd blame Chat Noir. He couldn't risk it.

Her heard a soft sniffle behind him and turned to see Nino in Marinette's seat, trying to comfort Alya. Alya's hair was a mess, hand covered her tear-streamed face, and she looked like she hadn't slept. Her phone was on the desk in front of her, but it wasn't lit up like normal. It was such an unusual sight that for a moment, Adrien was brought back to reality.

"Alya," he spoke up. "What's wrong?"

Nino looked up at Adrien sympathetically. "They still haven't found her."

Adrien froze. Of course. Alya was Ladybug's biggest fan and reporter. She would be the first person to know Ladybug was missing. His mouth went dry. What if she noticed how Adrien had been acting? What if she knew he was Chat Noir? What if she found out that he was the one thatâ€¦|thatâ€¦|.

"Her mom called me this morning," Alya sniffed. "There's no trace of her at all. And no ransom notes or anything either. It's like she just vanished into thin air!"

This statement confused Adrien. Alya knew Ladybug's mom? No. Now that he thought about it, she couldn't be talking about Ladybug. "Wait, who?"

Nino glared at him. "Dude, don't."

"What?" Adrien stared back at him in confusion. Why was it so wrong to ask who Alya was upset about?

"Marinette!" Alya screamed. She slammed her fist down on the desk in front of her. "Marinette! The little black haired girl that sat right behind you! The girl that tried everyday to get your attention because she was so in love with you! My best friend! And now she's gone and you don't even have the decency to be upset about it!"

Nino chased after Alya as she stormed out of the room sobbing, but not before throwing Adrien an angry glare.

Adrien felt his heart drop into his stomach.

Marinette was missing.

Plagg had been right. The unpurified akuma had come back. It must have found Marinette. What if she was forced to do evil against her will? Poor, sweet Marinette. Her smile was too bright to be taken over by-

Hang on a second. Did Alya say Marinette was in love with him?

* * *

><p>Once he was home, Adrien raced up to his computer and quickly typed Marinette's name into the search engine. What popped up immediately were small news reports about a missing girl in Paris. At the bottom of the list was a small article from the Ladyblog. Adrien paused for a moment and stared at the Ladyblog logo next to the article.<p>

Oh Ladybug. What he wouldn't do to have her back.

He forced himself to look away from the red and black spots and read the small blurb about Marinette.

'Ladybug, I know you read my blog, and I know I've never asked anything from you before, but please find my friend Marinette. She's gone missing and no one knows if it's from an akuma or something else, but this is not like her. Her parents are worried sick. I'm worried sick. Please, Ladybug. I wouldn't ask unless I thought something terrible had happened.'

Adrien felt his gut wrench. Reading Alya's plea to Ladybug was like a condemnation of himself. Ladybug couldn't help Marinette. Chat Noir had seen to that. Ladybug couldn't help anyone ever again. He pushed himself away from the desk and spun around in his chair. He couldn't take it anymore. All this pain and guilt. Without Ladybug, Paris was a mess. Even his own classmates were being affected. This was all his fault.

Plagg must have read his mind. "It's not your fault."

Adrien shook his head. "Yes. It is."

"No it's not, Adrien, don't be silly. You were being controlled." Plagg's voice slipped back to his normal self for a fraction of a second, but he softened right back up again when he saw how Adrien reacted to his words. "It's not your fault."

Adrien scoffed and pushed himself up out of his chair. He walked over to his window and looked up at the grey sky. The clouds were dark and heavy. Even they seemed upset about Ladybug. And now it wasn't even just Ladybug. He was responsible for Marinette, too. She was missing because he couldn't save Ladybug.

Why couldn't he have just fallen on his own hand instead? Rather him than her. Paris needed Ladybug. Chat Noir was nobody.

"Well," Plagg spoke slowly. "Maybe you can help?"

Adrien turned back to his kwami with a glimmer of hope. "I can bring

back Ladybug?!"

Plagg sunk down. "Erm, no."

"Oh," Adrien turned back to the window. Plagg's answer stung him harder than he expected.

"But!" Plagg spoke up again. "You can look for Marinette. You can find the akuma and capture it. Even if you can't purify it, you can contain it so it won't hurt anyone else. You can save Marinette and anyone else affected by the akuma."

Adrien simply shook his head. No, he couldn't. Not without her. Without her, he was useless. He'd probably find Marinette and then get taken over again and wind up killing her too.

"No, Plagg." Adrien sighed.

4. Chapter 4

A/N: I've addressed some comments and concerns on my tumblr (akirhenwrites). Please feel free to strike up a conversation with me. I don't bite! THANK YOU EVERYONE OF YOU THAT READS THIS! I love you all.

* * *

><p>After over a week of searching for any clue to Marinette's whereabouts, Adrien came up with absolutely nothing. The police had officially given up and declared it a runaway, but everyone knew that couldn't possibly be true. Even Chloe had to admit it wasn't like her. Marinette's parents still had an active manhunt going, but even they were starting to have major doubts that they'd ever see their daughter again.<p>

On the tenth day with no results, Plagg finally convinced Adrien to go looking as Chat Noir. He was incredibly hesitant to do so, but Chat Noir would be better at observation. So he gave in and found himself bounding over the rooftops of Paris.

He gave a wide berth to the part of town where he'd last held onto Ladybug. There was no way he was going to revisit that place. It was too painful. Instead, he went in search for any clues to the akuma that had gotten away. With Stoneheart, the akuma multiplied fast and created a havoc so large it was all over the television. This time, though, no one knew the akuma got away. There was nothing on tv, no strange akuma attacks, nothing to suggest that Chat Noir had prevented Ladybug from doing her civic duty. But he knew. He saw the akuma escape. It was out there, somewhere, and it had something to do with Marinette's disappearance.

Chat Noir found himself crouched halfway up the Eiffel Tower and looking out over the city. He wondered if Ladybug's friends and family were worried about her. They were probably clueless as to why she was missing, especially if she didn't tell anyone she was Ladybug. If Adrien disappeared one day, no one would know he was Chat Noir.

He furrowed his brow at that thought. He never got to know who his

Lady actually was. He destroyed her, and he never got to know her name. All he knew was that she had the best laugh, the bluest eyes, the blackest hair, and the confidence of a super hero that could change the world. Nothing he did could come close to being as daring and strong as she was. Ladybug had been his rock. And now? Now Chat was just a useless black cat running through the night without a single clue to where his school friend could possibly be. There wasn't a single trace of an akuma or Marinette anywhere.

Maybe she did run away.

No, Chat shook his head. She wasn't like that. Marinette loved her parents too much. And she loved Alya. She may have had her quarrels with Chloe, but everyone else at school loved her.

So where was Marinette?

The thought quickly vanished from his mind as he saw a flash of red out of the corner of his eye. He perked up in excitement. His eyes darted all over but he couldn't find any evidence of anything red. He couldn't possibly have imagined it, could he? Chat Noir got back up to his feet. He needed to keep looking.

* * *

><p>Plagg soared out of Adrien's ring and flopped on the couch with a heavy sigh and some mumblings about cheese. Adrien stood by his large window with his head resting against his arm.<p>

"You're the one that wanted me to transform so badly," Adrien muttered in reply. The kwami must have taken his comment as an angry retort, because he didn't hear anything back. Instead, Adrien was left to his own thoughts as he stared out into the city.

He had searched for hours and found no sign of Ladybug. Or Marinette, for that matter. Maybe he did imagine that flash of red after all. It was hopeless. It was useless. Ladybug was gone. Marinette was missing. They were both his fault. He couldn't find any evidence to prove that Marinette was missing because of an akuma, but Adrien knew. Something deep inside was scratching at the back of his mind. There was a reason it was his fault, he just didn't know what that reason was. He assumed it was because of the akuma, but something about that didn't fit either.

After a long while, Plagg floated up next to Adrien. "Hey Adrien?"

Plagg's voice had been so cautiously lately. Maybe the kwami was starting to get scared of him as well. Good. He should. Everyone should fear Chat Noir. He was a murderer. But he couldn't bring himself to tell the kwami to go away. Adrien had no friends, and without Plagg, no one would know anything about his true self. He'd be left alone with people that knew him little more than a stranger would.

"Yeah," Adrien finally answered with a sigh.

"I know this may seem too soon, but um, well," Plagg paused for a moment. "There's someone we need to go see."

"Who?"

"Um, well," Plagg shifted back and forth in a nervous fashion. "The one who gave you the miraculous."

Adrien turned his head to look over at the small black creature. "Wait, you know who gave it to me?"

Plagg shrugged. "Yeah. Of course. Master Fu."

Just as Adrien started to get excited, he felt the pull of everything that happened drag him back down. "Did he give Ladybug her miraculous too?"

Plagg nodded slowly.

Adrien looked back out the window. He didn't know if he could face this Master Fu after what happened with Ladybug. What would he say? 'Uh, hey, thanks for the powers, but I went ahead and killed off Ladybug with it, so can you just make another?'

The thought stung him. Could he do that? Just make another Ladybug? Adrien reached into his pocket and pulled out the earrings. He supposed that was possible. All they needed were these, right? All Adrien ever received was his ring. Did that mean Ladybug's kwami was somewhere in these earrings, or did it get destroyed too? The questions were too much. Even if this Master Fu punished him, Adrien had to ask.

"Alright," Adrien nodded and put the earrings back in his pocket. "Tomorrow we shall go see this Master Fu."

5. Chapter 5

Plagg dragged Adrien across town to a small massage and acupuncture business. The entire place smelled of incense. The kwami lead him back to a room where an elderly man stood with a rather large smile.

"Chat Noir," he sounded far too chipper. "It's nice to finally meet you."

The mention of his alter ego caused Adrien to pause a moment. Plagg told him that this man was the one responsible for his miraculous, but it was still strange to hear someone call him that when he was Adrien.

The man gestured to the floor. "Please, have a seat. We have much to discuss."

They both sat down on the floor. Plagg flew out from Adrien's jacket and hovered over by Master Fu. He gestured his chin up in a greeting. "Where's the cheese, old man?"

Normally, Adrien would have snapped at Plagg for such rude behavior, but everything about the situation was so bizarre that he wasn't entirely sure it was out of place. Instead, he just watched as Master Fu laughed and then pointed off to the side somewhere. Plagg ventured off and through a closed door, leaving Adrien alone with Master

Fu.

The man turned back to Adrien. "So, I suppose you'd like to know why I chose you?"

The question caught Adrien off guard. He expected to be chastised about Ladybug or told he was no longer allowed to be Chat Noir.

His heart sunk as Adrien realized that Master Fu probably didn't know what happened to Ladybug. No one knew. Unsure what to say, he put his hand in his pocket to take out the earrings, but before he could take them out, Master Fu started talking.

"You're a special person, Adrien," Master Fu leaned forward. "You have a kind heart and a gentle nature."

His words tore apart Adrien from the inside. The pain and fear and loss swelled up inside and Adrien let out a soft choking sob. He quickly buried his face into his hands and tried to keep himself from all out crying.

"Oh, my boy," Master Fu's voice was all too kind, and it hurt Adrien even more. "What could possibly be the matter?"

"I think I can answer that." A soft, sweet voice came from the side of Adrien.

Adrien jerked his head up to find a red kwami floating next to him. Immediately, he knew it was Ladybugs. The kwami must have been hiding in Ladybugs earrings.

"Tikki," Master Fu smiled once more. "Where is Ladybug?"

Tikki looked down at the ground. "Master Fuâ€¦something awful happened."

Adrien tightened his hands into fists on his lap. This was it. Once Master Fu found out what happened, he'd lose his ring. He'd lose Plagg. He would never be Chat Noir again. It was what he deserved, of course. He was a monster.

Tikki took in a deep breath. "Sheâ€¦she's gone."

"Gone?" Master Fu asked.

Tikki only nodded. Adrien waited for her to explain what happened, but she didn't.

"Oh dear," Master Fu's eyes lowered slowly to the floor. "Oh dear."

"It's my fault!" Adrien blurted out. He couldn't take the guilt anymore. "I was stupid and got myself taken over and I used Cataclysm and Iâ€¦Iâ€¦Iâ€¦"

His mouth went dry. He'd thought it a million times over. He'd killed Ladybug. He was a monster. But somehow saying the words out loud made it too real. He couldn't bring himself to do so.

"Hm," was all Master Fu replied.

Adrien didn't dare look back at the man. He already hated himself. He didn't think he could handle seeing someone else look back at him with the same hatred. Instead, he focused on a small spot on the floor.

The silence in the room felt incredibly heavy. Adrien swore he would have been able to hear a pin drop. Each second that ticked by seemed to stab into him. The thoughts from Tikki and Master Fu were surely condemning. Adrien felt like the world was pressing down on him. Losing Ladybug was the worst possible thing that could ever happen to him. No matter what Master Fu did, it couldn't hurt nearly as much. The only thing he could hope for was that he'd be allowed to keep Plagg. He needed the kwami. Without Plagg, Adrien had no one in the world to talk to. But there was no way. He didn't deserve to be Chat Noir. He didn't deserve his miraculous. He didn't deserve Plagg.

The red kwami finally spoke up. "It's not your fault, Adrien." Her voice was soft and sweet still, but he could tell she was on the verge of tears.

"Hm," Master Fu said again.

After another short silence, Adrien reached into his pocket once more and pulled out the earrings. He placed them on the floor in front of him. Then, after a short hesitation, he reached for his ring and started to take it off.

"What are you doing that for?" Master Fu spoke up.

Adrien lifted his head and met his gaze. He froze. He expected the elderly man to be glaring at him with hatred or disappointment or even fear, but instead Master Fu's face was almost pleasant.

"Iâ€uhâ€|" Adrien blinked. "I figured you want our miraculous' back?"

Master Fu shook his head ever so slightly. He reached forward and picked up the earrings. "This is not the first time this has happened."

"Really?" Adrien's body lifted ever so slightly in hope. He wasn't sure what that meant, but if it happened before than maybe there was a fix. "Is Ladybug okay then?"

Master Fu took in a deep breath and closed his eyes. "Cataclysm has the power to destroy anything it touches."

Adrien slumped back down and dropped his hands to the floor at his sides. For a moment there, he'd dared to hope. For a moment, he thought there was a way to bring her back. Instead, Master Fu had just confirmed everything. Adrien hated himself even more. He didn't just kill Ladybug he destroyed her. Somehow that made him even more of a monster.

"What am I supposed to do now?" Adrien felt his voice catch in his throat.

"Chat Noir can not be without a Ladybug." Master Fu gestured to the

earrings in his hand. "Tikki and I will make sure you have a partner soon."

At the sound of her name, Tikki flew up in the air. She still looked quite saddened, but determined.

Adrien felt like a dagger had been jabbed into his heart. He hated the idea of Ladybug being anyone other thanâ€|wellâ€|Ladybug. He didn't want another partner, he wanted his Lady back. He'd do anything to make that happen.

"The akumaâ€|Ladybugâ€|she didn't have a chance to catch it beforeâ€|beforeâ€|." Adrien couldn't say it out loud.

"Hm," was all Master Fu said in return.

"Don't worry," Tikki jumped in. "I'll make sure Ladybug catches it. So far it hasn't seemed to cause any problems, so I'm sure we can stop it before it becomes a problem."

"But it has," Adrien stared back down at the floor. "The akuma must have taken a girlâ€|a friend of mine from school. She's gone missing, and she's not someone who would just run away."

He heard a soft moan from Tikki and looked up to find the kwami avoiding his eye contact.

"Who?" Master Fu.

"He means Marinette," Tikki said.

Adrien shuddered at the sound of her name. "Ye-yeah. How did you know?"

Tikki swayed back and forth for a moment. She seemed hesitant to reply. "Wellâ€|"

"You're a smart boy," Master Fu said. "You'll find her. I'm sure."

"Master Fu!" Tikki gasped.

Adrien nodded. So Marinette was okay then. At least that was what he gathered from Master Fu's statement. Really, nothing he said so far seemed to make much sense. But if Marinette was alright, that lightened some of the guilt Adrien felt. It was the first glimmer of good news he'd had all week. It gave him hope. It gave him light. He was determined. Adrien was going to find Marinette, no matter what.

"Butâ€|how?" He asked.

Master Fu's eyes sparkled. "You'll see."

6. Chapter 6

Chat Noir found himself perched on top of the Eiffel Tower not long after sunset. The city of Paris glittered below him, but his mind was racing too much to notice the pretty sights. There were just too many

things to think about, and they flowed from one to the next without stop. There hadn't been a single akuma attack since Ladybug. Where was the unpurified akuma? Why wasn't Hawkmoth attacking when he had the upper hand? Did Master Fu know where Marinette was? He said this happened before. A long time ago, Ladybug told him that there had been Chat Noir's and Ladybug's before them. So another Chat Noir used cataclysm on Ladybug? What happened to her? Master Fu also said he'd see Marinette. How was he supposed to find her?

The breeze picked up and brushed the little string bracelet against Chat's wrist. He touched it lightly, but didn't look at it. It had been a gift from Marinette. It was a small thing, but it made him feel close to her again.

"Oh, Marinette," he said softly into the wind.

He rotated the bracelet on his wrist that she'd once proudly claimed brought good luck. The other day Alya yelled at him and said Marinette was in love with Adrien. Could that possibly be true? He thought she was still mad at him from the gum incident on his first day at school. She hadn't talked to him much, and every time he tried to converse with her, she seemed so upset she couldn't get out a single word. He knew that she wasn't shy because as Chat Noir he could converse with her just fine. In fact, she seemed so completely at ease around Chat that it only proved she hated Adrien.

Except, she hadn't hated him. She'd loved him.

Chat felt his cheeks get hot. He loved his Ladybug with all his heart, but knowing that someone loved him as Adrien tugged at him. Marinette was an incredible girl. She was kind and brave. He thought of all the times she'd been helpful to him and Ladybug. She was talented, that was for sure. She also didn't look at Adrien and see a model. Could she really love him for just...him?

A flash of red pulled his attention back to reality. Chat Noir turned just in time to see something fly off behind a building. His breath caught in his throat as he could have sworn he saw the string of a yo-yo in front of the red blur.

Could it beâ€¦|?

Chat Noir stood up as he remembered what Master Fu said. They were going to find a new Ladybug. He frowned. A new Ladybug. He knew he'd need her help, but he wasn't interested in someone new.

The string and red flash appeared again and this time the site almost brought Chat Noir to his knees.

"Ladybugâ€¦|."

She moved a little less gracefully, but it was her all the same. Her black hair was down, and flew behind her as she swung clumsily towards the next building.

Chat leapt off his perch and raced towards her. It couldn't be his Lady. But maybe Master Fu fixed it. Maybe something happened. Maybe just maybeâ€¦|.

As he got closer, the truth pushed it's way to the front of his mind.

He dropped down on the terrace next to the girl who was struggling to figure out her yo-yo. She looked nothing like Ladybug up close. Her hair was too long, she was much taller and her posture gave away her insecurities. This was not his Lady.

She turned and gasped as she spotted him. "Chat Noir!" Even her voice was different. It was soft and quiet and almost was swept away by the wind.

He tried not to cringe. "Heyâ€|Ladybug?"

She bit her lip. "Iâ€|uh...I guess. Tikki told me, you know, uh, that Ladybug was busy and you know, needed someone to take over for a little while. Are you â€|uhâ€|the real Chat Noir?"

Chat nodded in response to her question, but he'd only just barely registered it. He was mostly hung up on what Tikki told her. Ladybug was busy. She was only taking over for a while. Did that mean Tikki knew something he didn't? Was Ladybug alright after all, or was Tikki lying to make the transition for this new girl easier?

Either way, this was the new girl he would have to work with. Chat swallowed. "The one and only."

She smiled shyly. Even though she was obviously excited, her voice was still so quiet. "Wow, you're amazing. I can't believe it. And I'm like this." She glanced down at herself, then quickly blushed. "It's uh, going to take some getting used to."

"That makes two of us," Chat said to himself.

He didn't want to automatically dislike her. It was unfair. He knew that she was just thrown into this whole mess, but frankly, he didn't want her around. She couldn't even figure out her yo-yo. She would just get in his way, and he needed to find Marinette.

Chat cleared his throat. "Look, I don't want to bug out on your first day and all but I've got some things I need to take care of and-"

He was cut off as a loud explosion came from off in the distance. Both him and temporary Ladybug turned to see a glowing light fade off in the distance.

She gasped and clutched her yo-yo to her chest. "Oh no!"

An all too familiar laugh echoes up the alleyway towards them. It was soft, but Chat's extraordinary hearing picked it up.

He jerked upright as the recognition hit him. "Kingpin!"

Three truths screamed in his mind at the exact same time.

One: Kingpin was the akuma that got away. It was back.

Two: Marinette could be there. She probably was there. Master Fu practically said as much. Maybe.

Three: Ladybug, albeit the wrong one, was with him. She could use Miraculous Ladybug healing and set everything back to the way it was before Kingpin attacked the first time. That was before he used

Cataclysm.

His eyes widened as the plan unfolded before him.

Chat Noir grabbed Ladybug's wrist and pulled her towards the edge of the building. "Come on!"

7. Chapter 7

The second they arrived, Kingpin started throwing bowling balls at them. At first, Chat Noir left Ladybug on her own. He bounced around and easily dodged the attacks. But after he heard her yelp and get thrown back as she was hit, he realized that it wasn't going to be that easy.

Anger flared up inside him. She didn't know what she was doing. Lives were at stake and he was stuck with a Ladybug who couldn't even avoid a simple attack.

"Let's make this split a spare!" Kingpin shouted and brought Chat's attention back to him.

"Ug," Chat Noir rolled his eyes. Even though he was angry and upset, he couldn't help but mock the villain. "Bowling puns don't roll well with me."

Kingpin raced towards Chat Noir as Ladybug slowly got to her feet. Chat took this chance to keep the bad guy occupied and away from her. He only hoped that she knew what to do.

"Over here, gutter ball!" Chat chirped as he bounced off the wall. He moved just as an attack grazed by his side. Kingpin wasn't the most brilliant villain they'd ever faced, but he was fast. Thankfully, Chat was faster.

"Get over here!" Kingpin threw some more balls and pins towards the cat as he pounced around the open street. The cars spun around to line up like bowling pins as Kingpin rolled giant balls down towards them.

If he wasn't so worried about dodging the attacks, Chat would probably be laughing too hard to stand. The cars scattered as they were hit with a clattering sound one would normally hear in a bowling alley. Even with the threat of getting hit, he paused for a moment to laugh.

"Seriously?" Chat Noir grinned down at Kingpin from on top of the lightpole he'd just landed on.

"Stand still, you mangy cat!" Kingpin growled back at him.

Chat flipped a hand up in the air dismissively. "You'll never get a 300 with that attitude."

"Looks like it's time for a new player!" Kingpin straightened up and lifted a ball up under his chin.

Chat recognized the attack. It was the same one that got him before. It would take control of whoever it hit. Out of the corner of his

eye, he saw Ladybug was completely out of the way. It took him half a heartbeat longer than it should have to find her. She just looked so different. Her long hair was blowing in the breeze, and she was nervously hunched over. She looked nothing like Ladybug.

Kingpin yelled in fury as he launched a fury of attacks towards Chat. Chat Noir moved fast and managed to avoid the attack by a hair. Perhaps making Kingpin angry hadn't been the best idea. It was time they hurried up and got this akuma taken care of.

"Use your Lucky Charm!" Chat finally shouted after he noticed Ladybug was just standing there staring at him.

"Oh," she said. He watched as she looked towards her hip, then her other hip as she had the wrong one, and pulled at her yo-yo.

Chat Noir slapped his hand to his face and groaned. She was completely useless. How was he supposed to fight an akuma with her?

"ROLLING THUNDER!" Kingpin yelled as he slammed down in front of Chat Noir.

Chat was too busy with his annoyance at Ladybug that he almost didn't get away. Almost. He was still a sly cat, after all. He pounced off to the side and rolled away as a bolt of lightning struck the ground where he'd once been.

"Almost had a strike there!" Chat said.

"La-la-lucky charm!" Ladybug stuttered behind them as she threw her yo-yo into the air.

Kingpin's eyes turned towards her. Chat jumped back up to his feet. No way. Not now. He was so close. "Eyes on me, rental shoes!"

Kingpin shot Chat an evil glare. "These aren't rentals!" He roared as he charged towards Chat Noir.

Chat managed to keep Kingpin distracted for a while. It felt like forever. He was starting to worry that Ladybug had given up when she flew between the two of them and tossed a red spotted scarf in the air. While Kingpin was frantically trying to swipe the scarf off his face, she grabbed the patch off his shirt and tossed it to Chat Noir.

He caught it and just stared at it for a moment in his hands. A shiver ran up his spine. This was it. He gripped it with both hands and tore it apart. A purple akuma fluttered up out of it.

"Catch it!" His voice scratched as the pure intensity of his words choked in his throat.

Ladybug spun in a circle and then leapt into the air. She flipped above the akuma and caught it spectacularly in her compact. As she landed on the ground, a white butterfly emerged and flew up into the sky.

"Did you see that?!" Ladybug let out a nervous laugh. Her voice was

so low he almost didn't hear her. "I was totally amazing!"

Chat nodded a little too eagerly. He gestured quickly with his hand. "Come on, do the last part."

"Miraculous Ladybug!" She said as she tossed the scarf into the air.

Chat Noir took off before the pink light even started to swirl. There was no need to stick around for a fist bump. She wasn't even the real Ladybug. He'd never run so fast in his life as he dashed across the rooftops back to the last place he'd seen his lady.

This was it. He knew it. This had to work. It just had to.

He landed on the rooftop where that fateful incident happened. It was the first time he'd been back, and it was just as empty now as it had been after she'd disappeared. The pinkish light from Ladybug's spell flashed above him in the sky. Chat Noir sat down and waited.

And waited.

And waited.

8. Chapter 8

__**A/N: **__**yes, it's a short chapter. But it's important. I promise.**_

* * *

><p>Three **months** **later**

"No!" Chat Noir grumbled. "You're supposed to go to my left! My left!"

"I did!" Ladybug snapped back. Her voice was still soft, but she'd become more bold with him over the months.

"No, that was YOUR left!" Chat pointed to his right. "I said MY left!"

"It's confusing," Ladybug pouted.

The pair of them were inside an abandoned warehouse they set up for training. Truth be told, the warehouse was the recently acquired property of one Adrien Agreste, but he didn't tell Ladybug that. He didn't want her knowing who he was. Especially not her.

The problem was, this Ladybug was awful. He always knew his Ladybug was amazing, but he didn't realize just how special she was until he was forced to work withâ€|thisâ€|one.

"Well, get it right," Chat Noir let out his breath in a short, angry puff.

"You don't need to be a jerk about it," Ladybug mumbled.

Chat Noir spun around and threw his staff towards her. It whizzed

past her her ear, creating a soft enough wind to rustle her long hair. The staff clattered against the wall several feet behind her. She folded her arms, unamused.

"Tikki doesn't believe me when I said how impossible you are." She said with a snarl.

"Well, no one would believe you were actually the real Ladybug if they saw you in action!" He yelled at her. The anger inside him was causing his hands to tremble. "You can't even follow simple directions! It's a miracle there hasn't actually been an akuma attack since Kingpin or else all of Paris would be destroyed!"

She flinched, and started to sniffle. This was how it always went. They'd threaten each other, usually with near violence, and Chat would take it so far that she'd cry and run off. Fine. He was being unfair to her. Plagg had told him several times to take it easy with her, but he just didn't care. She was pathetic. The only reason he hadn't given up being Chat Noir was because somewhere in the back of his mind, he thought he could still fix everything.

But that part of him was growing smaller every day. Chat Noir was just an empty shell. There wasn't anything left but anger and guilt and sadness. He hated everyone, especially himself, and he had a tendency to take it out on this fake Ladybug.

"Just go already," Chat dismissed her with an arm gesture. He walked passed her as he went for his baton.

She snorted and paused for a moment. She seemed to be contemplating something, until she finally spoke up. "You know, it's not my fault she didn't come back!"

"What did you say!?" Chat Noir roared. His muscles tensed up and he spun around to glare at her.

She flinched, but stood her ground. "Stop acting like I'm the one that chased her away."

Chat sneered. Chased her away. Is that what Tikki said, or was this stupid girl just making assumptions? Either way, it didn't matter. She was useless, and he was wasting all his time trying to train her when she was obviously untrainable.

For a second, he thought he saw something behind her. A flash of red. It reminded him of a red streak he saw three months ago. Once he learned about Tikki, he had assumed it was her. But this time it couldn't be. Unfortunately, Ladybug draw his attention back to their argument and he quickly forgot about the flash.

She rolled her eyes. "If you could just act like a decent human being for just one second in your life, I might be able to put up with this. But no. I can't. Because you're horrible. I bet you have no friends in real life either."

It was his turn to flinch. Friends. No, he didn't have any of those. After Ladybug's death, after what happened to her, he just lost touch with everyone. Nino and Alya never talked to him anymore. Marinette was still missing and presumed dead. Even Chloe didn't bother him anymore. He'd managed to push away everyone in his life, both as

Adrien and Chat Noir.

"Shut up!" He snapped back at her. "You don't know anything about me!"

She threw her hands up in the air and left. A minute later, he snatched his staff and ran home.

* * *

><p>"She's a disaster. I can't work with her. She has no idea what to do and she's always out of sync with me!" Adrien dropped down on his couch with his hands to his side.<p>

"You're not very nice to her," Plagg said, again. "You're never going to fight together if you're always fighting with her."

Adrien grumbled. He was tired of this lecture. "She's fighting with me. She's impossible."

"I can hear what you say, remember," Plagg pointed out. "And you sound nothing like yourself."

"Just stop Plagg."

"I'm serious, Adrien. And you know how I hate being serious." Plagg flew up in front of his face. "You're not you anymore. You haven't acted like yourself since Kingpin. I'm worried about you."

"Well don't be," Adrien looked away. "I don't need your pity."

Plagg sighed. "Adrienâ€¦".

"Just stop, okay?" Adrien pushed himself up off the couch and headed towards his bedroom door. "I need everyone to just leave me alone for a while!"

"Where are you going?" Plagg started to fly after him.

"Out." Adrien pulled his ring off his finger and tossed it onto his desk. "Without you."

End
file.